

Return to 'Basic Education' Urged by Council

By HENRY C. MacARTHUR
Capital News Service

SACRAMENTO — Probably no organization in the United States gets at the root of the troubles besetting education and the educational establishment with as much perspective as the Council For Basic Education, which is located in Washington, D.C.

For a period of more than 12 years, the council, supported by citizens who advocate the best that can be had for the money in the educational field, has watched the

progress of education with a keen eye, and has advocated, as its name implies, the application of the "basic" in the field.

Mortimer Smith, executive director of the council, recently issued some observations on the subject. These come at a time when parents are wondering what the future holds in the nation's schools and colleges.

"This is a time of searching in education, time when we are trying, almost desperately, to find some de-

vices or arrangement that will alleviate the sickness that seems to run through our schools and colleges, as it does through our society as a whole," Smith declared.

He points out that some of the palliatives being urged on the public at the present time. One, he said, is "teacher militancy," a move which he indicates is taking place to improve the material status of the teacher, which very few people oppose, and then to "strengthen the power of

the unions to decide educational policy." This function, he points out, is one traditionally delegated by law to school boards.

"It is obvious to me at least, that the leaders of the labor movement among the teachers mean to reduce the power of school boards and administrators."

The claim that the move is for the benefit of students, he said, as shown by the events over the past year, is "largely spurious." Strikes in various parts of

the country, he pointed out, have caused a general public reaction against teacher organizations.

"In short," Smith said, "I believe that teacher militancy as a contribution to what ails the schools has not proved effective. It would seem that the supposed beneficiaries of this militancy, the children in the classrooms, have been short-changed, and the teacher's image in the public eye has been considerably tarnished."

Renewal of liberal education he suggests would be one of the methods to assist in corrective measures.

"The liberal arts are no cure-all" Smith stated, "but I believe that if we could manage a re-emphasis at this time on both their method and content, this would be a most effective contribution to our educational troubles."

The founding statement of CBE, says Smith, applies now as it did 12 years ago. "We said all students, excepting only those few

whose intellectual equipment is too clearly limited, should receive adequate instruction in the basic educational disciplines, and we named these disciplines as English, mathematics, science, history, and foreign languages.

"Implicit in that statement was the suggestion that there are bodies of knowledge suitable for all and that each body of knowledge has not only its own substance, but its own systematic form and structure."

Your Right to Know Is the Key to All Your Liberties

- Comment and Opinion -

TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 1968

The Campaign Wrap-Up

Tuesday's election results were almost like a politician's promise: there was a little something in it for everyone.

For California Republicans, the election of a native son as President and wresting control of the State Assembly from the Democrats would seem to make most of their efforts worth while.

Know the Law

Two traffic laws affecting the safety of children are broken so often that it is apparent many people aren't aware of them. With short days and early darkness upon us, it is important to give them some attention. First is the matter of passing school buses. If a bus is stopped on a highway and is showing red lights, you must stop until the lights stop flashing. . . . Second is the rule that bicycles are vehicles, just like autos, and must obey the same general rules. They must travel on the right, stop for pedestrians, signal for turns, etc.—*Thousand Oaks News-Chronicle; Marvin Sosna, Editor.*

The mere dumping of Jesse Unruh from the Assembly speaker's post is a notable accomplishment in Republican eyes.

For the Democrats, they won the hot contest to name a new U. S. Senator, they held their numbers in Congressional strength, and wound up with a national effort which far exceeded anything dreamed of in the days immediately following the Chicago convention.

The disquieting note of the campaign was the increased use of invective and personal attack as an integral part of some contests. In many cases it went far beyond acceptable limits, and in one neighboring community a candidate was pictured with Hitler, linked with a reference to his advocacy of gun controls.

Anyway, we're all glad the quadrennial election ritual is over again for a while. The politicians can now relinquish their hold on the boob tube time and we can go back to the serious things in life, like "Laugh-In," and "The Red Skelton Hour."

It's all been fun, but we've had enough.

When The New Trainer Takes Over -



ROYCE BRIER

A Little Speculation on What LBJ May Have Done

Who will say what were Lyndon Johnson's thoughts as he stood in Air Force One in Dallas less than five years ago and took the oath?

Not Mr. Johnson, of course, five years is deceptive in any life. We cannot recreate such a remote moment with any exactitude. Nor could Mr. Johnson recreate his moment for history. Many reasons would arise for avoiding revelation and reality.

We may fairly presume, however, that Mr. Johnson as he stood in Air Force One, resolved to be a President that Americans would never forget, a President of daring-do and vision and wisdom.

He had been one of the most successful politicians of our century, and the presidency is essentially a political office. If any living man could elude failure in a tumultuous and so shocked time, it was Lyndon Johnson. He would seize the best of the dead John F. Kennedy and compound it and add to it his own raging energy. That was all he had to do to become another Andrew

Jackson or Franklin Roosevelt, one who would change the course of American life, giving it a new momentum and strength and purpose, enough to last a long lifetime.

That was the way the new President looked to impressed observers in his first year in the White House.

Opinions on Affairs of the World

and we must presume again, that is the way he looked to himself.

But to pursue steadfastly his path to immortality, Mr. Johnson had to shun any grave error of judgment, error which could turn on him with unforeseen and sudden fury, and imperil his dream.

In a sense he was well-endowed for this perilous task. He knew the uses and also the limitations of power, and he knew how to handle his countrymen in the seats of power. He knew tricks for overcoming his foes. If the Americans were the only inhabitants of the planet, he

might have become an immense success, and immortal indeed.

Yet he was a Texan. Texas is so big and vigorous it is seems to Texans that if you know Texas, you know America, or even all mankind.

Not true, alas! The President inherited a little trouble in Asia. The way you handle a thing like that in Texas, you move! move! move! as the sergeant says to Gomer Pyle. Mr. Johnson moved! move! move! But Asia is even bigger than Texas, and nothing moved, and hasn't to this day.

This was sheer bad judgment, founded in ignorance of the Asians. Or should we say, ignorance of the place and function of the Americans on this planet.

Mr. Johnson did fairly well at home, civil rights and all that. But under the lash of Asia he became more and more messianic, until his very voice throbbed with false piety.

It was a trap. No matter what he said and did, the awful word "Vietnam" thundered and echoed behind him. He saw his country torn apart with anger. He could not go on to his destiny as President of all the people. He could not even choose a Chief Justice.

HERB CAEN SAYS:

A Native Son Says Farewell

Well, if you were a native San Franciscan moving permanently to another city, far away, what would YOU do on your last day in town? Please, don't all raise your hands at once.

Instead, let us follow Tommy Moreland on his final rounds before leaving for Parkersburg, West Virginia, his new home: "I left my cottage on Fifth Ave. in the Richmond" — his use of the archaic word, "cottage," stamps him immediately as a native — "dropped my luggage off at the Tenderloin Terminal and proceeded down Mason St. cable to the end" — only latecomers say the Powell cable — "and had my last fresh crab cocktail at Hogan's on the Wharf. Thence to my private resort at Aquatic Park.

"As usual, the Red Mountain gallon jugs of Burgundy, Pink Chablis and Vin Rose dotted the landscape. I mingled with high society, downing numerous libations laced with a few takes of the weed of forgetfulness. Floating over to the Buena Vista, where they pour the best booze at the best price, I partook of three Gibsons.

"Aboard the Hyde St. Car, I asked the gripman if he would wait for me at Union while I procured a butterscotch cone at Swensen's. Accomplishing this, and feeling a little bigger than the Bird called Johnson, I continued down Hyde.

"I debarked at Ellis, stopped in at Day's for a shot-and-beer, and bade farewell to Marvin, informing him that I would not be there to share the annual dissipation on the Saturday before Christmas. Considerably saddened, I caught the limousine to the airport where I proceeded to drown my woes in two more martinis.

"It is a wrench leaving San Francisco. I shall miss the Richmond, Sunset, Marina, Inner and Outer Mission, Breen's, Gray's, O'Doul's, Pier Seven, Dolph's, the J&B, best lunch in town for \$1.50 at 20th and York, Enrico's, the Both/And, the Bay Guardian, Hoppe, Caen, McCabe and Gleason . . . I won't miss BART and Market St., the atrocious new buildings, the Giants, 49ers, Warriors, Candlestick Park and Freeways.

Well, there you have it — the farewell address of a native San Franciscan, Tommy Moreland. The places he will miss seem mainly to be saloons, and true to his code, he drank himself out of town (how did that ice cream cone get in there? . . . He is sentimental but not a slob about it: no final toast to the sunset from the Top o' the Mark, a place he probably wrote off long ago as strictly for tourists . . . A real San Franciscan in the time-honored style: resentful of outsiders and change, and sturdily anti-Establishment. Good luck in Parkersburg, West Virginia, Kid. I hope they have at least one decent saloon; I think you'll need it, especially on those nights when you wake up suddenly out of a deep sleep, hearing foghorns that aren't there.

Notable quote from a leading hostess after a big party in a downtown hotel: "WELL, my dear, I never DREAMED I'd live long enough to hear myself ACTUALLY saying 'Look, kids, I don't mind marijuana but I absolutely DRAW the line at cocaine!'" . . . Before you look shocked and aghast, old friends, consider the Peninsula's "Nightgown Brigade," so labeled by bartenders along the commute route. The brigade is composed of housewives who throw overcoat over nightgown, drive hubby to the station and then check in at the nearby saloons for a few horns before returning beddy-bye. All this at 7 a.m. . . . The new St. Mary's Cathedral, abounding at Geary and Gough, looks absolutely GREAT with just those bare wooden forms on the outside. I say stop right there (forget the poured concrete) and cover it with philodendron to produce, at least, The Living Church.

I love the readers: Bette Heistand is disturbed by those TWA ads about "The Atlantic River," especially the line that begins "When you cross the river this fall—" Bette, fitfully: "The only river I can think of in that context is the Styx" . . . Friend to Addison Green: "Have you seen '2001'?" Addison, "No, but I read the books — Tarkington's 'Seventeen' and Orwell's '1984'" . . . KNBR's Del Boubel, who reported here recently that he had a fine time at Little Peavover and North Pidding in England, is hereby topped by Gordon Dixon of Santa Rosa, who spent some happy hours in Great Snoring and Pett Bottom. "The latter," he adds roguishly, "is where I wanted to spend the rest of my days, but my wife wouldn't let me."

WILLIAM HOGAN

Carl Sandburg's Letters Provide Insight to Poet

"Paula—if you are asked 'What is Circumstance?' tell them it's a laundry catching fire of a night and losing your three best shirts—first time I've been stung that way." In a kind of love letter, Carl Sandburg wrote this to his future wife, Lillian Paula Steichen, in 1908. It is typical of the minutiae of the poet's life which helps to shape a memorable portrait of the man and artist in "The Letters of Carl Sandburg."

The letters, as edited by Herbert Mitgang, the journalist and writer who helped prepare the groundwork for Sandburg's television documentary tour of Lincoln's "Prairie Years" (CBS Reports), unfolds Sandburg's life in his own words.

"The dreams and achievements as a writer," Mitgang notes, "the knowledge he gained by crisscrossing the country and

getting to know the American people and landscape, the journalistic and political expression and identity . . . the literary friendships of a lifetime."

Letters through six decades—to Amy Lowell, Robert Frost, William Rose Benet, H. L. Mencken, Archibald MacLeish, Sher-

Browsing Through the World of Books

wood Anderson, Lincoln Steffens, to Adlai Stevenson, in 1954: "Am amazed at how you meet great and difficult moments and make them your own." To Mary Hemingway, in 1961: "You are one of the most beautiful children of God to ever walk the earth." To John F. Kennedy, in mid-June of the same year: "I beg to salute you on wonderfully appropriate appointments made and two speeches that are to become American classics."

Along with his score of books, thousands of poems, essays and lecture-recitals, the poet-biographer wrote the story of his life in letters. Thousands were available after his death at 89 two years ago. His editor followed these criteria in selecting this large sampling: progression of Sandburg's life and career; significant literary history and friendships; poet language and thoughts that make letters interesting in themselves. The theme of the book, as Mitgang italicizes, is carried in a line Sandburg once wrote to the critic Malcolm Cowley: "Writing letters, too, is writing."

It was an astonishing American career, the son of Swedish immigrants riding box cars to Kansas and Colorado; the Chicago journalist, folklorist; poet extraordinary; denouncer of hypocrisy and political chicanery, biographer of Lincoln, whose personality and achievements greatly attracted the poet who made the virtues of American democracy his principal subject.

This is all vintage Sandburg, including his letter to the editor of the Century Magazine (1927) which had reported he employed a banjo in his recital-concerts: "At music stores and pawn shops the instrument is called a guitar. . . . A Guitar. The banjo is meant for jigs, buck-and-wing dances, attack, surprise, riot, and rout. The guitar is intended for serenades, croons, for retreat, retirement, fadeaway. I thank you."

Morning Report:

Communism — Karl Marx's cure-all for the world's ills — has now been topped and by a Soviet chemist. He calls it Phenigama and it is a remedy for sadness, alarm, timidity, irritation and bad moods.

While he is not pushing it yet on the open market, Dr. Vsevolod Perekalin maintains it is better than pot and other drugs used in the West. Naturally Americans will not be able to judge the value of the new product until we see how its TV commercials stack up with those of the other pills. Will Phenigama beat Excedrin?

And then of course, one day, there will be New, Improved, Phenigama. It will also end that stuffy, frustrated feeling you get from living under a dictatorship.

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Other Opinions

New Bern (N. C.) Sun-Journal: Impelled by signs of spring and curiosity as to how the motoring public was responding to nature's unfolding beauty, a man took a two-mile hike down the highway the other day. Along with birds and buds, here is what he saw: Two empty milk cartons, nine empty whiskey bottles, nineteen empty potato chip bags, six empty paint cans, twelve unidentified cans, sixteen miscellaneous items, and a hundred and ninety-six empty beer cans. This, mind you, was on one side of one road in only two miles.